

County talks budget hike to pay for semi-truck for community pantry

Written by By Cody Begaye Sun Correspondent
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Alice Perez, executive director of The Community Pantry and Hope Garden, was present at the Oct. 15 McKinley County Board of Commissioners meeting because she knew commissioners were scheduled to discuss a budget increase to cover the purchase of a semi-truck that would help the pantry extend its mobile food bank in the coming weeks.

The Community Pantry, 1130 Hassler Valley Rd., serves people across northwestern New Mexico, and includes a branch in Grants that serves all of Cibola County. The pantry provides services including free produce, an emergency food box, Food For Kids, The Emergency Food Assistance Program, and The Agency Program which assists local nonprofits and churches.

Commissioner Billy Moore said the commission previously approved about \$100,000 for the

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pantry to purchase a semi-truck at the Sept. 3 meeting. The estimated cost for the truck came to about \$125,000, leading to a requested increase in budget expenditures of \$30,000.

County Manager Anthony Dimas Jr. said the money that was approved at the Sept. 3 meeting was from capital outlay funds, or money that is used to either purchase a fixed asset or increase its period of usefulness.

“[This transfer] is carryover cash from statewide projects,” Dimas said. “The pantry was a little bit shy of the amount they needed [for the semi-truck], so this transfer is in case they need it.”

Chairperson Bill Lee agreed on the pantry needing a semi-truck.

“You do good work for the community by providing essential services,” Lee said.

The budget transfer was approved with a 3-0 vote.

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